

LISTING OF CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

1. (Currently Amended) A lubricant retention and bearing component comprising:
an annular thrust washer portion having an upper surface and a lower surface and having at least one radial lubrication channel disposed on at least one of the upper surface and the lower surface;
a cylindrical baffle portion perpendicular to, and coaxial with, said annular thrust washer portion;
a cylindrical element coaxially disposed within said cylindrical baffle portion, said cylindrical element open at opposite ends and defining an axial lubrication delivery passage; and
an annular base contiguously coupling said cylindrical baffle portion to said cylindrical element opposite from said annular thrust washer portion, wherein said cylindrical baffle portion, said annular base, and said cylindrical element cooperatively define an annular lubrication retaining volume concentric with said axial lubrication delivery passage and an end of said cylindrical element opens adjacent said annular thrust washer portion.
2. (Currently Amended) The lubricant retention and bearing component of Claim 1 further including wherein the at least one radial lubrication channel comprises a plurality of radial lubrication channels disposed on at least one of the upper surface and the lower surface of said annular thrust washer portion.
3. (Original) The lubricant retention and bearing component of Claim 1 further including a plurality of axially aligned ribs on an outer peripheral surface of said cylindrical baffle portion.
4. (Original) The lubricant retention and bearing component of Claim 1 wherein said annular thrust washer portion, said cylindrical baffle portion, said cylindrical element, and said annular base are of unitary construction.

5. (Original) The lubricant retention and bearing component of Claim 1 wherein at least said thrust washer portion is elastomeric.

6. (Withdrawn) An improved universal joint having at least one journal supported in a bearing cup held in a yoke of the joint, the journal having a lubrication channel extending there through and being provided adjacent its outermost end with an open ended lubricant chamber, the improvement comprising:

a component disposed at least partially within said open ended lubricant chamber, said component comprising an first cylindrical element defining an axial passage for lubricant extending outwardly from said lubricant chamber adjacent said lubricant channel towards the outermost end of the journal and terminating adjacent said outermost end, a second cylindrical element disposed radially outward from, and coaxial with, said first cylindrical element, said second cylindrical element contiguously coupled to said first cylindrical element adjacent said lubricant channel and defining an annular lubrication retaining volume open adjacent the outermost end of the journal in fluid communication with said axial passage for lubricant.

7. (Withdrawn) The improved universal joint of Claim 6 wherein said component further includes an annular thrust washer portion disposed adjacent said outermost end of the journal, said annular thrust washer portion contiguously coupled to said second cylindrical element.

8. (Withdrawn) The improved universal joint of Claim 7 further including a plurality of lubrication channels in said annular thrust washer portion.

9. (Withdrawn) The improved universal joint of Claim 6 wherein said component further includes a plurality of ribs disposed on an external surface of said second cylindrical element, said plurality of ribs configured for retaining engagement with an inner surface of said lubricant chamber.

10. (Withdrawn) The improved universal joint of Claim 6 wherein said component is of unitary molded construction.

11. (New) The lubricant retention and bearing component of Claim 2 wherein the plurality of radial lubrication channels are radially equidistant.

12. (New) The lubricant retention and bearing component of Claim 4 wherein said annular thrust washer portion, said cylindrical baffle portion, said cylindrical element and said annular base comprise an elastomeric material.

13. (New) The lubricant retention and bearing component of Claim 12 wherein the elastomeric material comprises nylon.

14. (New) The lubricant retention and bearing component of Claim 1 comprising a frustoconical chamfer disposed between the upper surface of said annular thrust washer portion and an inner surface of said cylindrical baffle portion.

15. (New) The lubricant retention of bearing component of Claim 1 wherein the end of said cylindrical element which opens adjacent said annular thrust washer portion is disposed below the upper surface of said annular thrust washer portion.